

minutes



Meeting ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 13th March 2006 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Hon Joan Taylor (Chair)
Bruce Laughton (Vice-Chair)

Kenneth Bullivant	A	George Kane
W J Clarke	A	Pat Lally
Barrie Cooper		J T A Napier
V H Dobson		Ken Rigby
Sybil Fielding		David Shaw

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Martin Brandon-Bravo
“ Stella Smedley

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 30th January 2006 having been circulated were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY'S REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2006

After Councillor Stella Smedley had introduced her report, Councillor Clarke congratulated her on the way she was performing her role, and the seamless transfer of responsibilities from Councillor Butler. Councillor Brandon-Bravo asked whether a “filter left” rule had ever been considered for the UK, along the lines of that found abroad. It was agreed to receive a brief report on this to a future meeting. Members commented briefly on other items in the report.

PERFORMANCE OF ENERGY SERVICES IN RELATION TO STREET LIGHTING

The Chair welcomed Alex Ogg, Steve Conway and Steve Owen from Energy Services, who added to the information presented. Mr Ogg explained that repairs had been brought in-house from contractors, but there remained a shortage of qualified craftsmen. More apprentices had been appointed and there was a national recruiting campaign. Mr Owen indicated that workers from other parts of the service were being brought to work in the East Midlands. Councillor Laughton wondered why there was not closer working with the DLO. Mr Conway replied that there was close working, with many columns connected within two weeks. However there were occasions when Energy Services were not informed of jobs. He said that revised figures were available which showed a better picture than that which had been circulated. Gary Wood, Environment Department, commented that Energy Services did not always have someone available at the time of installation. Mr Owen believed that it was important for the DLO to contact Energy Services at the planning stage, so that they could allocate resources. He added that a restructuring was planned, which would improve communication.

Councillor Taylor asked why there was a need to use Energy Services. Mr Ogg replied that Ofgen set the framework, with the licence holder being responsible for the health and safety of people working on the distribution network. In reply to Councillor Clarke, he indicated that there were 30 apprentices on a two year training programme to become underground cable jointers. Fault tracing required additional training. Councillor Fielding asked about the slow response to a fault in Rhodesia. Mr Owen and Mr Conway explained that this had resulted from technical and communication problems.

Councillor Napier felt that the slow response was unacceptable. Councillor Dobson commented that the problem had not existed 25 years ago. Mr Ogg referred to the increased amount of work to the highways. Councillor Laughton hoped to see an improvement in the service, given the number of complaints councillors received about faults. In reply to comments from Councillor Cooper about new lighting in Lady Bay, Mr Wood stated that the spacing between lamp columns and the power of the lamps was being looked at. Councillor Taylor wondered whether other areas would suffer if teams were brought to work in Nottinghamshire. Mr Owen replied that they would not, as work had levelled off elsewhere. Councillor Taylor indicated the Committee's continued intention to hold the Energy Services to account about their service.

NOTTINGHAM EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT MASTER PLAN

Nick Brown, Group Manager (Sustainability) introduced the report which summarised the main proposals of the Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA) Master Plan, currently under consultation, and commented on its implications for sustainability. Councillor Brandon-Bravo referred to the Corporate Strategy and External Affairs Select Committee's Study Group on the same issue, and hoped the two select committees could co-ordinate.

Councillor Rigby referred to the huge growth in cargo which was planned. He added that cargo flights had traditionally been at night time, using older planes. Councillor

Brandon-Bravo commented that the airport was very well located for freight. Councillor Cooper observed that the runway extension brought benefits, and might be worth carrying out sooner. Councillor Clarke supported expansion of activities at the airport, but referred to the need to improve the A453. Councillor Napier believed benefits from developing the airport outweighed the disadvantages. He wondered about the impact of technological advances, and wanted to know more about the environmental implications. Councillor Taylor wondered who would pay for alternative transport, since a reduced ratio of car parking spaces to passengers was planned. Mr Brown referred to the airport's investment in the Skylink bus. In relation to night flights, he explained that these might be limited by any new planning permission.

Councillors Cooper, Dobson, Napier, Rigby and Shaw expressed an interest in being involved in the Study Group established by the Corporate Strategy and External Affairs Select Committee.

MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Steve Calvert, Assistant Director (Environmental Planning) reminded the Committee of the Authority's need to produce two separate framework documents, replacing the previous local plans for minerals and waste development. The Select Committee on 31st October 2005 had established a working group of Members, and Cabinet on 8th March had approved a delay to the timescales. The waste development framework was proceeding in advance of the minerals framework. Councillor Clarke expressed an interest in participating in the working group.

FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan were noted.

WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Laughton suggested for scrutiny the cost of installing new lighting on highways. It was agreed to receive a report on this, before deciding if further scrutiny was needed. Councillor Cooper referred to the proliferation of signposts, on which Mr Calvert offered to report. Councillor Taylor observed that the report on LTP2 could be deleted and asked for a 3 monthly report on street lighting, progress on the carbon management review, and a report on wood heat after 6 months. The work programme was approved, subject to the above amendments.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm.

CHAIR

M_13march06